

Message Text

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17

ORIGIN PM-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 EA-11 NEA-14 IO-14 ISO-00 DODE-00

NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 MMS-03 NSCE-00 /146 R

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EA/P - MR ROSEN

EA/RA - MR FINCH

NEA/P - MR BRIGGS

NEA - MR LAINGEN (ACTING)

AF/P - MR LINEHAN

AF/RA - MR NAVEZ

S/PRS - MR PERNICK

EUR/NE - MR BUELL

----- 031604

R 151714Z MAY 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

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AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SANAA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION NATO
COMIDEASTFOR
CINCLANT
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
USCINCEUR
CINCUSNAVEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 100897

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, XO, US, UK
SUBJECT: JOURNALISTS VISITS TO DIEGO GARCIA

1. THE DEPARTMENT AND DOD, WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT CONCURRING, HAVE AGREED TO TRY TO ARRANGE VISITS TO DIEGO GARCIA BY A LIMITED NUMBER OF THE PRESS COMMUNITY. THERE ARE SEVERAL PROBLEMS WITH THIS THAT POSTS SHOULD BE AWARE OF. FIRST, DIEGO GARCIA IS, FOR PRACTICAL PURPOSES, ACCESSIBLE ONLY BY AIR VIA THE US AIR FORCE SUPPLY FLIGHTS FROM UTAPAO, THAILAND. THERE ARE THAI SENSITIVITIES TO THE USE
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OF UTAPAO FOR INDIAN OCEAN ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING SPECIFICALLY THOSE INVOLVING DIEGO GARCIA. BEFORE PROCEEDING FURTHER, WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR AMEMBASSY BANGKOK'S VIEWS ON THE FEASIBILITY OF ARRANGING FOR A FLIGHT FROM UTAPAO OF US AND UK JOURNALISTS, AND POSSIBLY THOSE FROM THIRD COUNTRIES. FOR ALL OTHER ADDRESSEES; WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR COMMENDS ON THE DESIRABILITY OF AT SOME POINT ALLOWING HOST COUNTRY JOURNALISTS TO VISIT DIEGO.

2. THERE IS ALSO THE SEVERE PROBLEM OF THE PAUCITY OF FACILITIES ON DIEGO FOR TRANSIENT JOURNALISTS. ALTHOUGH THAT IS ONE OF THE BEST REASONS FOR LETTING THEM ON THE ISLAND, IT ALSO WILL BORE THEM RAPIDLY. DOD IS CONSIDERING A SPECIAL FLIGHT, IF ONLY BECAUSE PRESENT SCHEDULES WOULD EITHER ALLOW TOO LITTLE TIME ON THE ISLAND, OR FORCE THEM TO SPEND TOO MUCH.

3. ONCE A DEISION HAS BEEN MADE TO GO AHEAD WITH THE

FLIGHT, AND DATES ARRANGED WITH THE DEPARTMENT, WE WOULD EXPECT TO TURN THE PROJECT OVER TO DOD. JOURNALISTS WOULD BE PICKED DEPENDING ON SPACE AVAILABILITY AND OTHER FACTORS TO BE DETERMINED BY DOD. WE UNDERSTAND THAT SEVERAL DOZEN HAVE ALREADY INQUIRED, AND ANY FURTHER WHO INDICATE AN INTEREST SHOULD BE REFERRED TO ODS/PA.

4. WE WISH TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT WE ARE NOT ENCOURAGING JOURNALISTS VISITS, PRINCIPALLY BECAUSE OF THE LOGISTICS PROBLEMS INVOLVED. NEVERTHELESS WE WOULD LIKE TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE, AND REGARD AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE MEDIA TO SEE DIEGO AS THE BEST POSSIBLE WAY WITH WHICH TO COMBAT MANY OF THE PURELY SPURIOUS AND FICTITIOUS RUMORS THAT HAVE CROPPED UP IN RECENT MONTHS.

5. WE WELCOME YOUR VIEWS ON PROBLEMS OR ADVANTAGES THIS MAY HAVE IN YOUR SITUATIONS. IN PARTICULAR, IF THERE ARE TIMING PROBLEMS YOU MAY HAVE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. RUSH

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